REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 2, 2005. Claims 17 to 26 are now pending in the application, with Claims 1 to 16 having been canceled and Claims 17 to 26 having been newly-added. Claims 17, 20 and 23 to 26 are the independent claims herein. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the indication that Claims 2, 3, 8 and 13 would be allowable if rewritten into independent form. In this regard, although the foregoing claims have been cancelled, newly-added independent Claims 17, 20 and 23 to 26 have been formulated based on, for example, allowable Claim 2. Thus, Claims 17, 20 and 23 to 26 are believed to be allowable.

Claims 11 to 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Without conceding the correctness of the rejections, they are nonetheless believed to be obviated by the cancellation of Claims 11 to 15.

Claims 1, 4 to 7, 9 to 12 and 14 to 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,886,028 (Matsuyama). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention relates to managing print orders between a user apparatus and a print management apparatus. According to the invention, use conditions are transmitted from the user apparatus to the print management apparatus. Based in the use conditions, the print management apparatus obtains print shop information of first candidate print shops and transmit the print shop information to the user apparatus. The user apparatus forms screen information for displaying print shops that are allowed to process a print order, where the screen information is formed based on the received print

- 8 -

ship information and an obtained print setting so that the print shops are indicated as being selectable or not. Then, when a print shop is selected, a print order is generated by the user apparatus, including a designation of the selected print shop, and the print order is transmitted to the print management apparatus.

Referring specifically to the claims, newly-added independent Claim 17 is directed to an information processing method for a user device and a print management apparatus, which are capable of communicating with each other via a network, comprising a use condition transmitting step of transmitting use conditions from the user device to the print management apparatus, a print shop information obtaining step of the user device obtaining print shop information of first candidate print shops from the print management apparatus in accordance with the use conditions, a print setting obtaining step of obtaining a print setting from the user device, a screen information forming step of forming screen information on the basis of the print shop information of the first candidate print shops and the obtained print setting so that the formed screen information indicates whether each print shop of the print shop information of the first candidates is selectable or not so as to promote selection of a print shop which is allowed to output a print order, and a print order transmitting step of transmitting the print order, including a designation of a selected print shop, to the print management apparatus.

Claim 20 is an apparatus claim and Claim 25 is computer medium claim, each of which are directed to the user apparatus side, while Claim 23 is an apparatus claim and Claim 26 is a computer medium claim, each of which are directed to the print management apparatus side. Claim 24 is a system claim. Each of Claims 20 and 23 to 26 include features substantially corresponding to those of Claim 17.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 17, 20 and 23 to 26, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of, a user apparatus, forming screen information on the basis of print shop information of first candidate print shops received from a print management apparatus, where the print shop information is obtained by a print management apparatus based on the use information and is transmitted to the user apparatus, and obtained print setting so that the formed screen information indicates whether each print shop of the print shop information of the first candidates is selectable or not so as to promote selection of a print shop which is allowed to output a print order.

Matsuyama discloses that information of a print server (print apparatus) is downloaded into a client computer in advance and the client computer forms a print order on the basis of the downloaded information. According to the patent, after a print order is generated, a price quotation is generated and presented to the user for each print server, where the price quotation is generated based on the server information downloaded in advance. Thus, while Matsuyama may display print servers that the user can submit the print order to, Matsuyama fails to disclose that the client computer receives, from the print server, print shop information of first candidate print shops that are obtained by the print server based on use information transmitted to the print server by the client. Accordingly, Matsuyama also fails to disclose that the client computer forms screen information on the basis of print shop information of first candidate print shops received from a print management apparatus and an obtained print setting so that the formed screen information indicates whether each print shop of the print shop information of the first candidates is selectable or not so as to promote selection of a print shop which is allowed to output a print order.

- 10 -

In view of the foregoing deficiencies of the applied art, Claims 17 to 26 are believed to be allowable.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward A. Kmett
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No.: 42,746

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3800
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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